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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

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TRSE-00 FRB-03 AID-05 /089 W
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R 090930Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2338
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0774

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: TURKISH WORKERS IN LIBYA

1. NUMBER OF TURKISH WORKERS IN LIBYA HAS BEEN A SUBJECT OF SPECULATION ON AND OFF SINCE PRIMIN JALLUD WAS QUOTED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO DURING VISIT TO TURKEY AS SAYING THAT LIBYA COULD USE 600,000 TURKISH WORKERS. IN VIEW OF APPARENT WORRY THIS HAS CAUSED, HIS COMMENT HAS TO BE REGARDED AS SOMETHING OF A PROPAGANDA COUP.

2. ACCORDING TO TURKISH AMBASSADOR OZKAN, THERE ARE NOW 3,500-4,000 OF HIS COUNTRYMEN WORKING HERE. THIS WILL RISE TO ABOUT 7,000. THEN TURKISH COMMUNITY WILL ABOUT EQUAL YUGOSLAV, PAKISTANI AND INDIAN COMMUNITIES, BUT STILL WILL BE FAR LESS THAN NUMBER OF PALESTINIANS, TUNISIANS AND, OF COURSE, EGYPTIANS. AMBASSADOR ALSO TOLD CHARGE THAT TURKISH WORKERS WOULD ONLY BE BROUGHT HERE FOR TURKISH PROJECTS. (EGYPTIANS, TUNISIANS AND SUB-SAHARANS OFTEN COME
IN INDIVIDUALLY AND OBTAIN WORK THROUGHOUT LIBYAN
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ECONOMY.)

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3. TURKS HAVE MAJOR PROJECT (US$170 MILLION) TO CONSTRUCT HOUSING IN SEBHA VALLEY AND IN TRIPOLI AND BENGHAZI AREAS. TURKISH COMPANY IS ENGAGED IN SUBSTANTIAL PROJECTS IMPROVING TRIPOLI HARBOR AND TOBRUK MILITARY PORT. THEY WILL ALSO BUILD ROAD FROM SEBHA TO SOME DISTANT LOCATION. ON MILITARY SIDE, SOME LIBYAN NAVY AND AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ARE RECEIVING TRAINING IN TURKEY.

4. COMMENT: WE SEE NO BASIS FOR SUGGESTIONS THAT TURKISH WORKERS WILL REPLACE EGYPTIANS IN LIBYA. TURKISH COMMUNITY MIGHT EVEN CONTINUE TO INCREASE GRADUALLY IF, AS TURKISH OFFICIALS HOPE, THEY CAN WIN MORE CONTRACTS FOR PROJECTS, LABOR INTENSIVE ONES BEING OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THEM. IN THIS REGARD THEY ARE IN DIRECT COMPETITION WITH EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST BIDDERS WHOSE COMMERCIAL TIES WITH LIBYA HAVE EXPANDED CONSIDERABLY IN PAST YEAR OR TWO. (FOR EXAMPLE, 2,500 POLISH WORKERS HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN BUILDING A MAJOR HOUSING PROJECT AT AL-MARJ, NEAR BENGHAZI.)
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